

A. L. WILLIAMS.

JANUARY 19, 1897.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. BELL, of Colorado, from the Committee on the Public Lands, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 9499.]

The Committee on the Public Lands, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 9499) authorizing and directing the Secretary of the Interior to sell certain lands to A. L. Williams, and for other purposes, have had the same under consideration, and report the same back to the House with the recommendation that it do pass with an amendment.

Mr. Williams holds certificates from the State of Colorado to purchase lots 1, 2, and 3 and the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter of section 16 (school land), El Paso County, Colo. He purchased this land for the purpose of building a cottage for his family; he employed a careful and reliable surveyor to run the lines; he did so, and Mr. Williams began at once the construction of buildings and has expended over \$600. After doing this work he was informed by the surveyor that a mistake had been made, occasioned by a shortage in the township, and that his buildings were about 580 feet over the line. The land Mr. Williams desires to buy is at a mean elevation of about 10,000 feet and is absolutely worthless for agricultural purposes, and can not honestly be taken for homestead purposes.

The bill was referred to the Secretary of the Interior, and its passage as amended is recommended by both the Secretary and the Commissioner of the General Land Office. The Commissioner says, "that Mr. Williams should be allowed to purchase a portion of the tract mentioned in the bill, sufficient to cover his improvements, inasmuch as he owns the adjacent property and appears to have used due diligence in an endeavor to locate his house on his own lands," and recommends that the description in the bill be changed so as to authorize the sale of the southeast quarter of the southeast quarter and lot five. This would authorize the sale of 69.73 acres.

Your committee therefore recommend the passage of the bill with the following amendment:

In line 6, after the word "of," add the following words: "the southeast quarter and lot five of."